

Inclusive entrepreneurship trends and policies in Italy

This profile presents key data on self-employment and entrepreneurship activities by women, youth and seniors in Italy and highlights recent inclusive entrepreneurship actions including the SELFI Employment initiative that supports youth entrepreneurs.

Key trends: The self-employment rate was higher in Italy than the average for the European Union in 2016 (21.5% vs. 14.0% for the EU) and was particularly high for men (25.6%) and seniors (23.9%). At the same time the Total early-stage Entrepreneurial Activities (TEA) rate was low relative to the European Union average over the 2012-16 period (4.4% vs. 6.7%), indicating that Italians were less likely to be engaged in starting and managing businesses that are less than 42 months old. This was true for all social target groups but the gap was largest for youth (5.1% vs. 7.8% for the EU). Necessity-based entrepreneurship was very high over this period, which is consistent with the difficult labour market conditions. A higher proportion of entrepreneurs in Italy started their business because they lacked opportunities in the labour market than in the European Union (22.1% vs. 15.8% for the EU). This proportion was greatest for women, where nearly one-quarter (24.2%) started their business due to a lack of other opportunities relative to 11.5% in the EU.

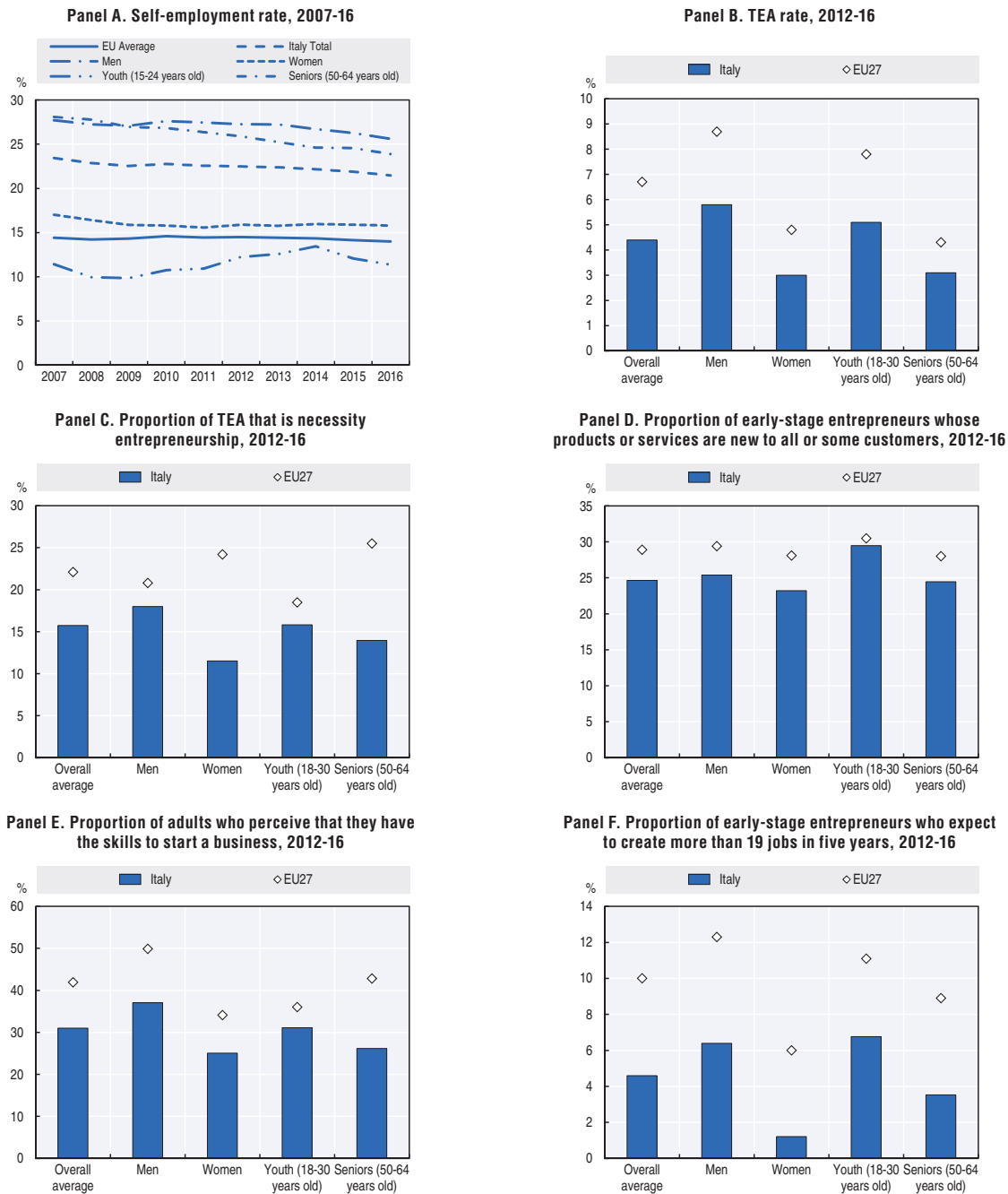
Hot issue: A current policy issue is the development of entrepreneurship education at primary and secondary school level. Schools have generally been slow to implement entrepreneurship education in response to the new law on schooling (Law 107/2015). The law aims to facilitate the establishment of short-term internships within private and public entities in high schools. This could open up the avenue for more systematic contacts between high schools and networks of start-up facilitators, taking place at the local level without the need for any additional legislation.

Recent policy developments: Youth entrepreneurship has been the focus of many recent initiatives given the high levels of youth unemployment. The Chambers of Commerce have set up a national network of one-stop shops (*Sportelli per l'imprenditoriagiovanile*) to support youth entrepreneurs. This network provides young people a free service specifically dedicated to those who want to create a new firm. The service is focused on integrated guidance, training, mentoring, and support geared to the needs of start-ups and post start-ups. This includes improved access to credit, microcredit and national or regional public incentives. In practice, its interaction with other entities still has to be clarified, specifically with the Youth Guarantee Initiative (2014-20). About 5.7% of the resources of the Youth Guarantee are dedicated to the promotion of self-employment and entrepreneurship, mainly within the SELFI Employment initiative. This initiative is for youth 18-29 years old who seek to start a business. There are two steps in the initiative: i) training and coaching consultancy to figure out how to move from an entrepreneurial idea to a business plan and ii) facilitating access to financing, i.e. credit or to the SELFI Employment Fund. Further, participants are supported by a mentor.

The full Country Assessment Note can be found at: www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/inclusive-entrepreneurship.htm.

Key inclusive entrepreneurship data

Figure 23.1. Entrepreneurship and self-employment data for Italy



Notes: 1. The self-employment rate is defined as the number of self-employed people (15-64 years old) divided by the number of people in employment. 2. The TEA rate is the proportion of adults (18-64 years old) involved in setting up a business or managing a business that is less than 42 months old. 3. Necessity entrepreneurship is defined as entrepreneurship activities that were launched because the individual did not have other options in the labour market. 4. Early-stage entrepreneurs are those who are in the process of setting up a business or manage a business that is less than 42 months old. 5. In Panels B, C, D, E and F, the population covered are those 18-64 years old.

Sources: Panel A: Eurostat (2017), Labour Force Survey, available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/database>; Panels B, C, D, E, and F: GEM (2017), Special tabulations of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor adult population survey, 2012-16.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933625319>

Reader's guide to the country profiles

This section of the book provides a short overview of inclusive entrepreneurship trends and recent policy actions in each European Union Member State. Each Country Profile highlights recent trends for key inclusive entrepreneurship indicators, focusing on activity rates, quality and barriers to business creation for people in under-represented and disadvantaged groups, drawing on a set of charts (see below). In addition, the Country Profiles briefly describe a current policy issue relevant for inclusive entrepreneurship policy development. Finally, each Country Profile describes a recent policy action that was introduced to support the unemployed, women, youth or seniors in business creation and self-employment.

The country overviews are complemented with a common set of country-specific data that benchmark key inclusive entrepreneurship indicators against the European Union average and over time. Data are presented for men, women, youth, seniors and the overall population total. These data help to show the scale of the challenge and its recent evolution. All Country Profiles contain six figures (except for the Malta profile, which does not participate in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor survey):

Panel A: Self-employment rate, 2007-16. This presents the proportion of those in employment who are self-employed.

Panel B: Total Early-stage Entrepreneurship Activity (TEA) rate, 2012-16. This presents the proportion of the population who is actively involved in starting a business or who is the owner-operator of a business that is less than 42 months old.

Panel C: Proportion of TEA that is necessity entrepreneurship, 2012-16. This presents the proportion of early-stage entrepreneurship that was launched due to a lack of other opportunities in the labour market.

Panel D: Proportion of early-stage entrepreneurs whose products or services are new to all or some customers, 2012-16. This presents the proportion of early-stage entrepreneurs who self-report that they offer products and/or services that are new to potential customers.

Panel E: Proportion of adults who perceive that they have the skills to start a business, 2012-16. This presents the proportion of the population who believe that they have the knowledge and skills needed to start a business.

Panel F: Proportion of early-stage entrepreneurs who expect to create more than 19 jobs in five years, 2012-16. This presents the proportion of early-stage entrepreneurs who anticipate the creation of at least 19 additional new jobs over the next five years.



From:
The Missing Entrepreneurs 2017
Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship

Access the complete publication at:
<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264283602-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD/European Union (2017), "Inclusive entrepreneurship trends and policies in Italy", in *The Missing Entrepreneurs 2017: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264283602-28-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to rights@oecd.org. Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at info@copyright.com or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at contact@cfcopies.com.